The Dewan opened the proceedings of the Assembly with the following

## ADDRESS:—

Gentlemen,

Under command of His Highness the Maha Rajah it is my privilege to welcome you to the second meeting of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. Last year you appeared as the members nominated by the Government. This year you come as the accredited representatives of the people. The privilege of election which has been granted to the people at such an early stage of the career of the Assembly you owe to the enlightened generosity of His Highness. I trust that this signal mark of confidence will make you only the more solicitous to maintain the character for good sense and moderation which you have already earned both within the State and outside it. The excellent manner in which you acquitted yourselves last year, although unaccustomed to such assemblies, augurs well for the future stability of the institution, and if the same spirit animates your representations and discussions in the coming years the permanent usefulness of this Assembly is assured. I have noted with pleasure that the elections throughout the State were conducted with much enthusiasm and public spirit and that on the whole the members elected are fairly representative of the different sections of the community over whom His Highness holds sway.

I will now proceed to place before you a short account of the administration during the past year.

2. **Land Revenue.**—The season was generally unfavourable for agriculture in the Padmanabhapuram, Trivandrum and Quilon Divisions where there was a rise in the prices of food-grains. In the Kottayam Division the season was better and there was no appreciable variation in the prices. The wages of labour remained almost stationary.

In my address last year, I referred to the peculiar features of the Land Revenue system in the State. Until the Settlement operations now in progress are completed, it would not be possible to place the revenue administration on a sound and efficient basis. The Revenue Code Bill has, as you are aware, been introduced into the Legislative Council by Mr. Rajaram Row and the several important questions which it seeks to solve will be thoroughly discussed and the representations which have been already made as well as those that may be made hereafter will be duly considered before the measure is adopted.

The current demand for the year was Rs. 23,76,398, of which Rs. 22,57,636 or 95 per cent was recovered. Under arrears the demand amounted to Rs. 1,94,142 and the recoveries to Rs. 41,684 or 21 per cent. A sum of Rs. 1,63,986 was due as liabilities and outstandings, of which Rs. 32,383 or 20 per cent was collected. With regard to the low results attained under the last two heads, it may be observed that they are attributable partly to the defects in the system and the absence of reliable accounts.

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